



# Join Us In Measuring Progress

A Monthly  
Assessment Newsletter  
December 2002

## Assessment for Learning

### MontCAS, Phase 1, Norm-Referenced Tests: The Iowa Tests IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Materials, testing, scoring and reporting for on-grades(4, 8, and 11) are provided and paid for by the state.
- Procedures for the receipt and distribution of materials are the same as in 2001 and 2002.
- The 2003 Montana customer service representative is:  
Kelly Hills, 800-323-9540 x 7090  
Kelly\_hills@hmco.com



Linda McCulloch, Superintendent  
Office of Public Instruction  
PO Box 202501  
Helena, MT 59620-2501  
[www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

Off-grade (grades other than 4, 8, and 11) testing by schools is optional and not covered by the state. Procedures and arrangements need to be made through Riverside rather than the Office of Public Instruction.

Contact Frosyne Mensendick, 800-323-9540 x 7090  
Frosyne\_Mensendick@hmco.com

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### Test Administration Training

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Jan. 10          | Deadline to register for Test Administration Training. Register online at:<br><a href="http://www.opi.state.mt.us/assessment/index.html">http://www.opi.state.mt.us/assessment/index.html</a> |
| Feb. 6           | Comprehensive Test Administration Training by Video Conference.   |
| Feb. 7 and 10    | Refresher/Update Test Administration Training by Conference Call.   |
| Feb. 10 - Mar. 7 | Districts and schools conduct and complete local training for test administration.  |

#### Testing Materials: Receipt, Inventory, and Distribution

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Feb. 12          | Riverside ships trailer packages to test coordinators.  |
| Feb. 17 - 21     | Riverside ships materials to test coordinators.   |
| Feb. 24 - Mar. 5 | Test coordinators inventory existing and new materials.<br>Use FAX ME forms (provided in trailer package)<br>if more items are needed.  |
| Mar. 7           | Test coordinators complete dissemination of materials to schools.   |
| Mar. 10 - 28     | Testing window<br>May administer 4th grade practice tests within this window.<br>Make-up tests must be administered within this window. |



## The Use of Accommodations in Administering the ITBS/ITED

By Frank Podobnik, School Improvement and Monitoring Specialist, OPI

Once again the window for administration of the ITBS/ITED tests is fast approaching. Now is a good time for test administrators and test coordinators to gather information regarding the needed accommodations for students in their school or district. Remember,

“An inclusive statewide assessment system requires participation options, the availability of a full array of supports, informed decision-making on the part of a student’s instructional team, and careful documentation of the supports necessary for participation in the statewide assessment. The specific needs of students with disabilities (i.e., students with IEPs, as well as those with Section 504 plans) and students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are discussed relative to these features of Montana’s statewide assessment system.” (*Assessment Handbook*, Vol. 3, p 9).

Based upon these needs of students, four options are available for administering the statewide assessment.

Detailed descriptions of each of these options can be found in the *Assessment Handbook*, which is available from the Office of Public Instruction and online on the assessment web page: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/assessment/index.html>. (Choose Phase 1 and scroll to the bottom of the page where you will find the handbook and the alternate assessment scales.) In determining what accommodations an individual student will receive the student’s IEP team must consider the needs of the student and not get caught up in whether a particular accommodation is standard or non-standard. If the student needs a non-standard accommodation to participate fully in the statewide assessment, that accommodation should be provided.

Each individual IEP or 504 plan needs to be checked to ensure that the identified accommodations are provided. This double check of the plan is also necessary to ensure that adequate resources are available to provide the listed accommodations.

Remember, our goal is to ensure the participation of every student in the statewide assessment in a manner that provides the most accurate assessment of his or her academic abilities.

## MontCAS, Phase 2, Criterion-Referenced Tests: Measured Progress

REMINDER: The criterion-referenced test is required **and paid for** by the *No Child Left Behind Act*.

- Thank you for your great response to the Criterion-Referenced Test Pilot. • If you would still like to participate, please send your registration to Measured Progress or complete it online [http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/MontCASReg/) MontCASReg/ **by December 20**. • Registrations are being processed on a “first come, first served” basis.
- Measured Progress will notify schools and districts during the week of January 13, 2003.

### Facts about the pilot

- Part of the development of the criterion-referenced test as required by Montana’s Compliance Agreement with USED and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.
- The pilot will establish the quality and appropriateness of items for Montana students.
- The pilot items were written, edited, and reviewed by Montana educators.
- The pilot items are owned by Montana and will be used only for Montana students.
- The pilot is for a criterion-referenced test not a norm-referenced test, so this is not a norming study.
- The pilot is included in the contract between the Office of Public Instruction and Measured Progress (at no cost to Montana schools).

### Testing window: April 14 - 25, 2003

- 40-45 minutes for one class/test session.
- Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 10—Register for one or more.
- Reading or mathematics—Register for one or both.
- Great opportunity for students to get practice on a test that will be implemented statewide in 2004.
- Need sample representative of the state and large enough to provide reliable and valid information about student performance.
- Participation in pilot helps students, teachers, schools and districts be better prepared for implementation of CRT program in 2004.
- Teacher questionnaires will be included with test materials providing an opportunity for Montana educators to provide feedback on test items developed by Montana educators in the fall of 2002.

## Facts About Statewide Testing in Montana — Required by State or Federal Law

### MontCAS (Montana Comprehensive Assessment System), Phase 1

- Norm-referenced test, the Iowa Tests—compares students to a national norm group
- Published by Riverside Publishing Company
- Required by state law
- Administered in grades 4, 8, and 11
- Includes Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science
- Testing window for 2003: March 10 -28

### NAEP, National Assessment of Educational Progress

- Required by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*
- Participation required every two years in all states/territories and school districts that receive Title I funding
- Administered in grades 4 and 8
- Includes Reading and Mathematics
- Testing window for 2003: January 27 - March 7

### MontCAS (Montana Comprehensive Assessment System), Phase 2 Pilot

- Criterion-referenced test—compares student performance to Montana content standards
- Published by Measured Progress and developed in partnership with the Montana Office of Public Instruction
- Required by federal law and Montana's Compliance Agreement with USED and the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*.
- Participation in the pilot is voluntary
- Administered in grades 3-8 and 10
- Includes Reading and Mathematics
- Testing window for 2003: April 14 - 25

Testing Time, Spring 2003				
	MontCAS, Phase 1 2003	NAEP 2003	MontCAS, Phase 2 Pilot 2003	Total 2003
Grade	Testing Time			
3	Not tested	Not tested	45 minutes	45 minutes
4	5 hours, 26 minutes	90 minutes	45 minutes	7 hours 41 minutes
5	Not tested	Not tested	45 minutes	45 minutes
6	Not tested	Not tested	45 minutes	45 minutes
7	Not tested	Not tested	45 minutes	45 minutes
8	5 hours, 26 minutes	90 minutes	45 minutes	7 hours 41 minutes
10	Not tested	Not tested	45 minutes	45 minutes
11	4 hours, 20 minutes	Not tested	Not tested	4 hours, 20 minutes

## Invitation from SAT to Districts

Dear Principal,

We are pleased to invite your school to participate in the field trials for the new SAT and PSAT/NMSQT during the weeks of March 10-26, 2003. Your students can help shape the new SAT by testing new item types. These changes are designed to align the test more closely to curriculum and skills required for success in college today. Writing, three years of high school math, and strong preparation in critical reading are regarded as the cornerstones of a good college preparatory curriculum. We need a good variety of schools and a good diversity of students in order to test the new kinds of questions. Currently, we have very few schools participating from the state of Montana and would very much appreciate your participation. To register your school for the trial, please contact Chung Hsieh at 408-573-5637 or email [chsieh@collegeboard.org](mailto:chsieh@collegeboard.org). Thank you.

## Board of Public Education Ad-Hoc Assessment Study Group

The Board of Public Education has asked the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council (CSPAC) to convene an ad-hoc assessment study group. The study group will be comprised of individuals with expertise and/or interest in Montana assessment. The purpose of this study is to define a comprehensive-integrated and coordinated assessment system for children attending Montana accredited schools.

The first meeting of the study group will be January 8, 2003 in Helena. Details of the meeting are in letters to the participants. For more details, contact Peter Donovan, CSPAC, 406-444-6576, [pdonovan@bpe.montana.edu](mailto:pdonovan@bpe.montana.edu) or Judy Snow, OPI, 406-444-3656, [jsnow@state.mt.us](mailto:jsnow@state.mt.us).

## ONLINE Spring 2002 Test Results

- The interactive site of test results has been expanded and has a new set of instructions plus a link to convert the data to Excel. After converting it to Excel, it can be easily printed. <http://data.opi.state.mt.us/irisreports/>
- Systems consisting of more than one district can now access the data for the administrative system rather than separately for elementary and high school districts.

## *Happy Holidays!!!*



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